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Freedom Takes "No Step Backwards."

SPEECH

OF

HON. HARRISON G. BLAKE,

OF OHIO.

Delivered in the House of Representatives, February 19, 1861.

The House having under consideration the report from the select committee of thirty-three—
Mr. BLAKE said:

Mr. SPEAKER: The events now transpiring around us will cast their shadows upon coming ages. The words uttered now—be they words of wisdom or folly—will ring in the ears of future generations to the remotest period of time. We are passing through a crisis in the history of our country which has no parallel in the history of the world. A few short months since, and the various political parties of the day were organizing and drilling their forces for a political conflict, the like of which had occurred once in four years in our political history ever since the adoption of the Constitution, in 1789. All felt that it was a great conflict—great to those who had for many years held the offices of the country, and used their official positions to plunder the people and bankrupt the Government; great to those who had made use of the Government, in defiance of the Constitution, to foster, protect, and extend slavery; and great to the mass of the people who desired to bring the Government back to the well-tried paths of virtue, economy, and constitutional liberty, so well defined by Washington and Jefferson in their administration of the Federal Government.

But great as the several parties engaged in this conflict may have regarded the issue, no man could have been made to believe then that the unsuccessful party would refuse to obey the voice of the people when constitutionally expressed at the ballot-box. Sir, for more than half a century the people of this nation have been engaged every four years, with high political excitement, in the election of a President; and the pride of the nation and the admiration of the civilized world in regard to our country has been that, however turbulent and excited

the people may have become during these contests, no sooner than the will of the majority, expressed through the ballot-box, is known, than that will is respected and obeyed by all.

By thus acting, our people have put to shame the dynasties of the Old World, and vindicated the right of the people to govern themselves; they have solved that great problem which for ages had engaged the attention of the philanthropist and philosopher, and made evident to the world "that man can be governed, and yet be free."

Sir, what do we see now? For the first time in the history of our country we see a portion of the men engaged in the election of a President refuse to obey the will of the people, expressed at the ballot-box. For the first time, sir, since the adoption of the Constitution, we find an organized minority in open rebellion against the Government of the people, and with the avowed determination of destroying both the Constitution and the Union. It is true that South Carolina, in 1832, attempted something of the same character, and which had the same objects in view; but it was not carried to the same extent, because the patriotism of General Jackson rose higher than party fealty, and he, as President of the United States, brought the power of the Federal Government to bear on the rebellious State, to coerce her into subjection to the Constitution and laws. Sir, I would speak with candor and moderation, rather in sorrow than anger, and with an earnest desire to bring this crisis to a peaceable solution; but, at the same time, I would speak the truth with all plainness. With no hostile feeling toward any section of our country, regarding the North and the South, the East and the West, all alike, my country, I should deeply regret to add anything to the flame of sectional excitement which now

unhappily prevails. These excitements in the South have been produced by falsehood, and they must be allayed by truth.

Sir, the circumstances which surround us here are very peculiar. A short time ago, during the political contest that was then going on in the country, while each party was marshalling its hosts for the final result on the 6th day of November, 1860, every man, woman, and child in the nation looked for a conclusion of that contest in peace and harmony, as such contests had always heretofore terminated. When we assembled here at the commencement of this Congress, we all looked forward to a submission on the part of the minority of the people to that overwhelming voice of the majority that had gone up from all over our country, proclaiming to the world that Abraham Lincoln was elected President of the United States. But, what do we now behold? What was the spectacle exhibited here a few days since on the counting of the votes for President and Vice President? Why, sir, sovereign States that had gone into the election, and thereby pledged their faith to abide the result, came here and had their votes counted, when at the same time they were in the commission of treason against the Federal Government, and endeavoring to destroy the Union! Sir, the civilized world is amazed—it is amazing to honest men everywhere, to behold the action of these States, and of the men in them who are pushing these things to extremities.

These men say they will dissolve the Union and destroy the Government. For what is this to be done? Has there any aggression been committed against any of the seceded States by the General Government? No man pretends it. What, then, are the grievances of which these States complain? Is your slave property less secure to-day than it was ten years ago? Every slaveholder knows that he has nothing to fear on the subject of slavery in the States where that relation exists by force of law. Is it because of the personal liberty bills of the free States, and the non-execution of the fugitive slave law? The personal liberty bills were, most of them, passed before the passage of the fugitive slave law, and were made to protect the rights of freemen. Nearly every State has such laws now in force for the protection of freemen. Have any of the seceding States ever lost a slave by these personal liberty bills or by the non-execution of the fugitive slave law? Not one, sir. No man can show that any one of the States now in rebellion against the Constitution and the Union have any just cause to complain of either personal liberty bills or the non-performance of duty on the part of the General Government in enforcing the fugitive slave law. On this subject the Senator from Georgia [Mr. IVERSON] remarked:

"We have a fugitive slave law of which the South does not complain. It is sufficiently guarded to accomplish all the objects for which it was designed, if there was a proper public sentiment in the Northern States. No better fugitive slave law could be devised by this Con-

gress or any other. It clothes the Judiciary and Executive of this Government with ample powers to execute the laws. We do not complain that any Executive has ever been derelict in his duty in the discharge of this law. Mr. Fillmore was President when this law was passed, and it received his sanction; and I am ready to say, that, so far as he was concerned, he carried it out. General Pierce carried it out, and the present Executive. So far as they have the power, they have done their duty faithfully."

Sir, I venture to say that no law, so barbarous in its provisions as that fugitive slave law was ever enforced by a Christian nation with one half the fidelity that that law has been.

Why, sir, the Government has made it a specialty for the last eight years to force slavery on the people of Kansas, to plunder the national Treasury, and to catch runaway negroes. The two last Administrations seem to have no higher conceptions of statesmanship than the accomplishment of these purposes. Sir, when a nigger runs away, the Army and Navy are immediately put into requisition, and the proclamation of the President issued to the good people of the United States to make haste and catch the poor slave, and coerce him into subjection; but when a sovereign State runs away, the President calls on all the people to sing psalms in the hearing of South Carolina, and sends a special message to Congress, asking this body to be very circumspect in its legislation, lest, by hasty action, it might create a coolness between the State and the Federal Government.

Sir, a few months since, when the news came here that Montgomery and a few others in Kansas had helped some slaves to escape, the President at once sent an efficient officer of the Army in the command of a sufficient force, to enforce the laws and coerce Montgomery and his men into subjection; but when South Carolina set the laws of the United States at defiance, fired on our national flag while waving over a United States unarmed ship, loaded with provisions and men for a national fortress, Mr. Buchanan says it will never do to send men and arms to protect the public property and enforce the laws for that would be coercing a sovereign State. Sir, General Jackson and George Washington did not so understand their duties. The one put down nullification with the Army and the Navy in South Carolina; and the other the whisky insurrection in the State of Pennsylvania. No one then supposed that a State was being coerced by enforcing the laws and punishing traitors.

Sir, what has the South to complain of? There is not a law on the statute-book of the United States affecting slavery which was not put there at the demand of the slave power, and by the votes of its friends. The Missouri compromise the fugitive slave law, and compromise measures of 1850, were all passed by Congress at the dictation of slaveholders, and supported by their friends. The North has talked about restriction on slavery in the Territories, but no act for that purpose has been passed; so that the laws of the United States to-day on the subject of slavery are

just what the slaveholding interest has made them. Do the slave States apprehend any danger from the legislation of Congress on the part of the Republican party? It cannot be possible; it would be an imputation on the intelligence of Southern gentlemen to think otherwise. What is the state of parties in Congress, sir? Why, in the Senate those opposed to the Republican party have fourteen majority; and in the House nine majority. In the next Congress the majority against the Republicans in the Senate will be less, and more in the House; but a decided majority against them in both branches. The South have a majority—indeed, it may be said nearly all—of the judges of the Supreme Court of the United States in its favor; so that any question touching the interest of slavery would certainly be decided according to the *dictum* of that court in the *Dred Scott* case.

Sir, in the face of these facts, I appeal to the candor of Southern gentlemen to know how it is possible for any section, if so disposed, to deprive the South of any of her constitutional rights? And yet, with all these facts known to every sensible man in the country, the Republican members of Congress are called upon, day by day, to make some compromise to "save the Union." The Republican party is a Constitution, Union-loving party. The Constitution as it is, the Union which was the result of the formation of the Constitution, and the enforcement of all laws passed in pursuance of the Constitution, is the platform upon which that party will administer the Government, if it is true to itself and the best interests of our common country. Why this demand on the Republican party for compromise? It has nothing to compromise; and if it had, it has no power in either branch of Congress to pass one. Why do not gentlemen who insist on compromise, and who have the power in this House and the Senate, pass one to suit themselves? Will it be said, sir, that a portion of the members from the Southern States have left Congress, and thus given to the Republicans a majority in that body? It is true, a majority has thus been given to that party in the House, and almost a majority in the Senate. But, sir, will the South dissolve the Union because we have not the power to catch her runaway members of Congress, and compel them to perform their duties?

The seceders profess to believe there is great danger to slavery from the Executive branch of the Government having passed into the hands of the Republican party; and thereupon they abandon their places in Congress, and thus surrender the legislative department into the same hands to cure the evil! Sir, had the seceding members remained in their places, and performed the duties which appertain to their position, not only would the Republican party be in a large minority in this Congress, but would be powerless in the next. Who, then, is to blame? Certainly not the Republicans; but those who, by their rash acts, precipitated this state of things on themselves.

But, it is said, "compromise." "You can afford to compromise." "You are the triumph-

ant party, and can afford to be generous." "We only ask a slight concession; just simply that you will ignore your principles, destroy your party, and turn your back on your constituents; that is all we ask; a very small concession, involving no sacrifice of principle." This is the siren song that is sung here from day to day. Why, sir, what have we done, that we should compromise? What has the Republican party done, that it should compromise with men with arms in their hands, and threatening the destruction of the Government? Have we violated the Constitution? This is not pretended. Is the Republican party in antagonism to the Constitution of the country? Not at all, sir. Can it be shown that the Republican party do now, or ever have intended to trench upon a single constitutional right of the Southern States in this Union? No, sir; no man can maintain a pretension of that kind.

What, then, is the cause of the complaints of these men? Why, simply, that they desire to secure an amendment to the Constitution that will elevate slavery from the local position of being a State institution, supported by State laws, and the responsibility of sustaining it resting only on the people of the State where it exists, to the position of a national one, protected by the Constitution throughout the United States, and the responsibility of it resting alike upon all the people of the nation. And the second cause of complaint is, that the men who have been hanging like leeches on the public Treasury for the last eight years, and have plundered the nation of millions, until the Government debt created by them amounts to about one hundred million dollars, are now to be turned out to grass, "to root, hog, or die." [Applause in the galleries.] Sir, these two things constitute all the trouble. Concede to the South that slavery may go into all the free Territories, and that the men who have been stealing the public money for many years past may continue that business, and the Union will be saved at once.

What other reason can be given for the shaking of the Union from centre to circumference? Why, sir, we passed a resolution through this House by a unanimous vote a few days since, declaring that Congress had no power, under the Constitution, to legislate on the subject of slavery for the States. What more can Southern gentlemen ask than this! If they ever had any fears that the people of the North desired to interfere with slavery in the States by congressional action, this, certainly, ought to allay them all. The vote of every Republican member present was given to this resolution; and the Chicago platform declares the same thing, which has received the endorsement of Mr. Lincoln and every Republican in the United States. I submit to the candid men of the South, if they can ask more than this, and expect to obtain it?

What, then, sir, do the grievances of the South amount to? Why, just this, no more and no less, namely: "We will submit to the Constitution and the Union so long as you will permit us to control the Government; but when you fail to do this, we will destroy both the Consti-

tution and the Union." This is the modest claim of the seceding States; that is, that a majority of the people shall submit to the rule of a minority. Now, can there be any compromise on a question of this kind?

We are accused of standing by our party to the neglect of the country; and if this was true, it would, indeed, form a grave charge. Sir, parties are of no consequence, only as they can be used to accomplish the best good of the country. And it is because the Republican party, in its principles, is essential to the political salvation of the country, that I will not sacrifice it at the demand of those who have manufactured a crisis, to accomplish, among other things, the destruction of that party. Sir, any compromise that can now be made would demoralize the Government, and result in disaster. I dare not, therefore, listen to the terms of any compromise. Let Mr. Lincoln be inaugurated, and develop his policy to the country; the Constitution *obeyed*, rather than amended; the laws enforced, instead of being resisted; and it forms the best compromise for the times, and will save the Union.

This is the second attempt that has been made by South Carolina to dissolve the Union. General Jackson said of the men of South Carolina who made this attempt, in a letter dated May 1, 1833:

"I have had a laborious task here, but nullification is dead, and its actors and courtiers will only be remembered by the people to be execrated for their wicked designs to sever and destroy the only good Government on the globe, and that prosperity and happiness we enjoy over every other portion of the world. Haman's gallows ought to be the fate of all such ambitious men, who would involve their country in civil war, and all the evils in its train, that they might reign and ride on its whirlwinds, and direct the storm. The free people of these United States have spoken, and consigned these wicked demagogues to their proper doom. Take care of your nullifiers; you have them among you; let them meet with the indignant frowns of every man who loves his country. The tariff, it is now known, was a mere pretext." *

* * * * "Therefore, the tariff was only the pretext, and disunion and a Southern confederacy the real object. The next pretext will be the negro or slavery question."

Thus, nearly twenty-eight years ago, General Jackson predicted that South Carolina would make the negro question a pretext for dissolving the Union, as she had done before the tariff question. Colonel Benton says on this subject:

"The regular inauguration of this slavery agitation dates from the year 1835; but it had commenced two years before, and in this way: nullification and disunion had commenced in 1830, upon complaint against protective tariff. That, being put down in 1833 under President Jackson's proclamation and energetic measures, was immediately substituted by the slavery agitation. Mr. Calhoun, when he went home from Congress in the spring of that year, told his friends that 'the South could never be united against the North on the tariff question—that the sugar

interest of Louisiana would keep her out—and that the basis of Southern union must be shifted to the slave question.' Then all the papers in his interest, and especially the one at Washington, published by Mr. Duff Green, dropped tariff agitation, and commenced upon slavery, and in two years had the agitation ripe for inauguration on the slavery question. And in tracing this agitation to its present stage, and to comprehend its *rationale*, it is not to be forgotten that it is a mere continuation of old tariff disunion, and preferred because more available."—*Thirty Years in the Senate*, vol. 2.

General Jackson and Colonel Benton understood what this slave power intended to do, and early warned the country against its efforts to destroy the Union and form a Southern confederacy, in which slavery should be the soul, and the opening of the African slave trade supply it with the blood.

It is said, if we will adopt the Crittenden compromise, peace will be restored to the country. What is that compromise, sir? It is simply the Breckinridge platform put into the Constitution, with some slight modifications, making it stronger in favor of slavery. To make this plain, sir, I will place the two in juxtaposition, that every man may read for himself:

Breckinridge Platform.

1. That the Government of a Territory organized by an act of Congress, is provisional and temporary; and during its existence, all citizens of the United States have an equal right to settle with property in the Territory, without their rights either of person or property being destroyed or impaired by Congressional or territorial legislation.

2. That it is the duty of the Federal Government, in all its departments, to protect, when necessary, the rights of persons and property in the Territories, and wherever else its constitutional authority extends.

3. That when the settlers in a Territory having an adequate population, form a State Constitution in pursuance of law, the right of sovereignty commences, and, being consummated by admission into the Union, they stand on an equal footing with the people of other States; and the State thus organized ought to be admitted into the Federal Union, whether its Constitution prohibits or recognises the institution of slavery.

Crittenden Compromise.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives, That the following article be proposed and submitted as an amendment to the Constitution, which shall be valid, as part of the Constitution, when ratified by the Conventions of three-fourths of the people of the States:

First. In all the Territories now or hereafter acquired north of latitude 36° 30', slavery or involuntary servitude, except for the punishment of crime, is prohibited; while in all the territory south of that latitude, slavery is hereby recognised as existing, and shall not be interfered with by Congress, but shall be protected as property by all departments of the territorial government during its continuance. All the territory north or south of said line, within such boundaries as Congress may prescribe, when it contains a population necessary for a member of Congress, with a republican form of government, shall be admitted into the Union on an equality with the original States, with or without slavery, as the Constitution of the State shall prescribe.

The adoption of such a compromise as that, sir, is political suicide to every man from the free States who votes for it here. Not only does this proposed amendment protect slavery in all the territory we have where that institution can possibly go, but in all the territory, way down to Cape Horn, which it is the intention of the slave power to acquire, by negotiation, robbery, or theft, hereafter. Such a proposition will never receive the assent of the people of the free States.

The laboring men of the North will abide by the Constitution of Washington, Jefferson, and Madison, and freely give to every section all its constitutional rights; but they never will consent to abandon the work of the patriots of the Revolution, establishing freedom to man, and adopt that of Yancey and Rhett, to protect slavery.

Sir, the compromises now proposed require that freedom shall make the sacrifice; and so it has ever been with the compromises since the adoption of the Constitution in 1789. I desire, sir, if we are to have new compromises, that slavery shall make the sacrifice. Slavery is the cause of all our troubles; slavery menaces the Constitution and the Union; slavery proposes to destroy our Government, and drench the land in fraternal blood. Freedom proposes to stand by the Constitution *as it is*, and defend the Union formed by our fathers; freedom asks for peace, and seeks no change in our form of Government, and is satisfied to give to every section all its constitutional rights. Slavery should, therefore, make the sacrifice, if the change is made. Now, the compromising is all on the side of slavery; let us have some on the side of freedom. If the Constitution is to be amended, let that part of it which now gives to the South a representation based on its property in slaves be stricken out, or a provision put in, giving the people of the free States a representation based on their property. Let the free inhabitants of our country form the basis of representation here, amend the Constitution so that no more territory can be acquired; and pass the homestead bill, giving every man one hundred and sixty acres of the public domain who will go and reside on it for five years, and I would be willing to leave the question of slavery to the free, untrammelled will of the people of the Territories.

But, sir, all the proposed compromises remind me of the story of the white man and Indian, who, in the early history of our western country, agreed to hunt one whole day, and divide their game at night. Accordingly, they hunted all day. At night, it was found that the Indian had killed a turkey, and the white man a turkey-buzzard; and the great question now to be settled, was how to divide the game. After much dispute, and some language that would not be considered very orthodox in these days, it was agreed that the white man should name over the game, and the Indian should take his choice. Thereupon, the white man says to the Indian: "You may take the buzzard, and I will take the turkey; or I will take the turkey, and you may take the buzzard." "Oh, but," said the Indian, "you no say turkey to me once." [Applause in the galleries.] Just so it is with these compromises—they never talk turkey to freedom once. What is slavery, that we should compromise with it? Go, sir, to the records of the South for an answer to this question. In the case of *Neal vs. Farmer*, (9 Georgia Reports,) the court decided that if there was no statute prohibiting it, it was no crime to kill a slave:

"Licensed to hold slave property, the Georgia planter held the slave as a chattel; and whence

did he derive title? Either directly from the slave trader, or from those who held under him, and he from the slave captor in Africa. The property in the slave in the planter became, thus, just the property of the original captor. In the absence of any statutory limitation on that property, he holds it as unqualifiedly as the first proprietor held it, and his title and the extent of his property were sanctioned by the usage of nations which had grown into law. There is no sensible account to be given of property in slaves here but this. What were, then, the rights of the African chief in the slave which he had captured in war? The slave was his to sell, or to give, or to kill."

Again: the North Carolina supreme court, in the case of the State *vs.* Mann, (2 Devereux's Reports, page 268.) Mann was indicted for wounding a slave woman; and the question was, whether a man could assault a negro. There was no statute punishing it; and the question was, does the common law protect the slave? The opinion was delivered by Judge Ruffin. He says:

"Slavery has indeed been assimilated at the bar to the other domestic relations, and arguments drawn from the well-established principles which confer and restrain the authority of the parent over the child, the tutor over the pupil, the master over the apprentice, have been pressed on us. The court does not recognise their application. There is no likeness between the cases. They are in opposition to each other, and there is an impassable gulf between them. The difference is that which exists between freedom and slavery, and a greater cannot be imagined. In the one, the end in view is the happiness of the youth, born to equal rights with that governor on whom the duty devolves of training the young to usefulness, in a station which he is afterward to assume among freemen. To such an end, and with such an object, moral and intellectual instruction seem the natural means; and, for the most part, they are found to suffice. Moderate force is superadded only to make the others effectual. If that fail, it is better to leave the party to his own headstrong passions and the ultimate correction of the law, than to allow it to be immoderately inflicted by a private person. With slavery it is far otherwise. The end is the profit of the master, his security and the public safety; the subject, one doomed, in his own person and his posterity, to live without knowledge, and without the capacity to make anything his own, and to toil that another may reap the fruits. What moral considerations shall be addressed to such a being, to convince him of what it is impossible but that the most stupid must feel and know can never be true—that he is thus to labor upon a principle of natural duty, or for the sake of his own personal happiness? Such services can only be expected from one who has no will of his own; who surrenders his will in implicit obedience to that of another. Such obedience is the consequence only of uncontrolled authority over the body. There is nothing else which can operate to produce the effect. The power of the master must

be absolute, to render the submission of the slave perfect.

"I most freely confess my sense of the harshness of this proposition; I feel it as deeply as any man can. And as a principle of moral right, every person in his retirement must repudiate it. But in the actual condition of things it must be so. There is no remedy. This discipline belongs to the state of slavery. They cannot be disunited without abrogating at once the rights of the master, and absolving the slave from his subjection. It constitutes the curse of slavery to both the bond and free portions of our population. But it is inherent in the relation of master and slave.

"That there may be particular instances of cruelty and barbarity, where in conscience the law might properly interfere, is most probable. The difficulty is to determine where a court may properly begin. Merely in the abstract it may well be asked, which power of the master accords with right? The answer will probably sweep away all of them. But we cannot look at the matter in that light. The truth is, that we are forbidden to enter upon a train of general reasoning upon the subject. We cannot allow the right of the master to be brought into discussion in the courts of justice. The slave, to remain a slave, must be made sensible that there is no appeal from his master; that his power is in no instance usurped; but is conferred by the laws of man, at least, if not by the laws of God.

"I repeat, that I would have gladly avoided this ungrateful question. But being brought to it, the court is compelled to declare, that while slavery exists among us in its present state, or until it shall seem fit to the Legislature to interpose express enactments to the contrary, it will be the imperative duty of the judges to recognise the full dominion of the owner over the slave, except where the exercise of it is forbidden by statute. And this we do upon the ground that this dominion is essential to the value of slaves as property, to the security of the master and the public tranquillity, greatly dependent upon their subordination, and in fine, as most effectually securing the general protection and comfort of the slaves themselves."

Sir, where is the man in the free States that is willing to take the responsibility of extending such an institution to the free Territories, or to give it new constitutional guaranties? If such a man can be found among the free institutions of the North, I will neither envy his head nor heart.

The gentleman from Virginia, [Mr. DE JARNETTE,] in his speech a few days since, said :

"I have known, Mr. Speaker, for ten years, that dissolution must come. I have seen the irrepressible conflict between labor and capital at the North, and known that it could but result in favor of the former, inasmuch as that labor possessed the revolutionary power there, to wit: the elective franchise. Wherever, sir, there is free competition between labor and capital, and that labor is armed with the unrestricted right to vote, the labor being always in the majority, must sooner or later so control

the law-making power as to hold the capital subject to its will. That labor has, for many years past, controlled the law-making power of New England. It has now gained control of the law-making power in many States west of the Hudson; and in the last Presidential contest, it aspired to, and obtained, the control of the law-making power of this Government. Wherever there is free competition of labor and capital, and that labor vindicates its power to control the Government, liberty cannot long survive. But the worst form of despotism will exist as long as there is capital left upon which it can feed. When this fails, the only result which can follow is, for such a people to return to barbarism.

"Thus, society at the North is now pregnant with the seeds of its own destruction. Its only salvation is a stronger Government, and a restriction of the elective franchise. This is not speculative theory, but fact; it is not wild imaginings, but history.

"The standing armies of the Old World are maintained to keep labor from warring on capital; not by controlling the law-making power, for that labor has not the elective franchise, and hence cannot aspire to the forms of justice to legalize its robberies; but those armies are maintained to protect that capital from mob violence. What protection has your capital from the legalized robbery to which it is even now sometimes subjected? Does not this free labor now set at naught your State decrees, if they are annoying to it? Has it not scaled the ramparts of the Federal Government, destroyed the Constitution, enthroned the higher law in its stead, and justified such action by alleging that their own State laws, *which they had made to screen themselves*, required them to despise the authority of the General Government?

"It is the free suffrage and free labor of the North which now controls the press, the bar, the schools, and the pulpit. It is the free labor of the North which has invaded the sanctity of God's altar, and compelled its ministers to acknowledge its divinity by dethroning Jehovah and worshipping Beelzebub. It is the free labor at the North which has invaded the highest judicial tribunal of justice, destroying its prerogatives, and teaching men to despise its decrees. Sir, it has so shattered the framework of society, that society itself exists only in an inverted order at the North. Capital at the North for a long time waged an unequal contest with labor. It looked then to the Government, and found that impotent for aid. For momentary security, it seemed to sympathize in the objects of the fanatics, and to point to the institutions of the South as fit objects for attack. Fatal delusion! They not only introduced the Trojan horse into their counting-houses, but drove away their best customers by their efforts to enslave them.

The gentleman from Virginia in this truly speaks the sentiments of the slave power against free labor. The free laboring men, who sustain our country in peace and defend her in war, are denounced as being in favor of the

destruction of the Constitution and the dissolution of the Union. Mr. Speaker, these laboring men are the very ones who will ever defend both the Constitution and the Union. And, sir, it is because they desire to preserve the Union, that they say to me to-day, "Make no compromises with slavery;" "s and by the Constitution as our fathers made it, and bid defiance to traitors who would destroy our Government."

Sir, let us listen to no compromise with the seceding States until they will concede that the Government of the United States is a Government proper, and not a mere compact of States; that secession is rebellion, and that it is the duty of the Government to put down such rebellion; that no State can dissolve the Union; that it is the right of the Government to collect the revenue and protect the public property; that the voice of the majority of the people of the United States, when constitutionally expressed, shall be the law of the land; and that all men who attempt to deprive the people of the full force of such expression shall be punished as traitors; that the Constitution, as it is, shall be obeyed rather than amended; that slavery, being the creature of local law, can have no legal existence beyond the jurisdiction of such law; and that Abraham Lincoln, having been elected President of the United States fairly, and according to all the forms of law, shall be inaugurated as such. Let us not talk about compromise until all

these concessions are made. Sir, any compromise that acknowledges the power of a band of traitors to force concessions from the loyal people of the United States, is the destruction of the Union and the demoralization of the Government. Let us consider no such compromise until we have settled the question whether we have a Government—a Government that will protect itself and punish traitors at all hazards. Let the authority of the Federal Government be recognised and respected, the stolen money, forts, arsenals, and navy-yards, be returned to their proper owner. Let the rattle-snake flag be supplanted by the stars and stripes, the flag of our country, of Washington and Jackson—that flag which has hitherto given protection to all our citizens, at home and abroad, all around the globe. When this is done, I shall be willing to receive these "prodigal" sons of the South, who have been wasting their "substance with riotous living," into their father's house again; and when I see them returning to a sense of duty, while "yet a great way off," I will be ready to embrace them as brethren, with compassion. But, until then, let us see to it that we do nothing that shall inflict a wound on the free institutions of our country, that ages will pass away before it is healed. Let every patriot in our country rally around her glorious old flag, and stand by the Union without an "if," and the Constitution without amendment.

WASHINGTON, D. C.

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